

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14 through 16, 30 and 31 are pending in the application.

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Hand for her thoughtful discussion of the cited art during a telephone call on March 24, 2009.

In accordance with that discussion, independent claim 14 has been amended in the present Amendment to define the hinge that connects an edge of the base panel to an edge of each of the one or more side panels to provide complete folding of the side panels onto the base panel. New claims 30 and 31 depend from claim 14 and further define the hinge. Support for the amendments and new claims is in Figure 7 (reference number 104) and on page 11, lines 28 – 32. No new subject matter has been added.

Claims 14 through 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,633,533 to Meehan (hereinafter, "Meehan").

Meehan discloses a disposable, foldable article used to neutralize odors when placed in a toilet or bedpan. Before use, Meehan's article folds along hinge 4 to encase the deodorizing liquid between portions 2 and 3. As shown in Figures 2, 4 and 5, hinge 4 is continuous with portions 2 and 3. This is clearly different than the hinge for the absorbent article in claim 14, which connects an edge of the base panel to an edge of a side panel to provide complete folding of the side panels onto the base panel. In addition, Meehan fails to disclose or suggest a side panel having an island disposed between the top sheet and bottom sheet, as required in claim 14.

For these reasons, Meehan fails to disclose or suggest claim 14.

Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 14, and further define the side panels and base panel, respectively. For at least the same reasons as provided for the independent claim, Meehan fails to disclose or suggest claims 15 and 16.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102(b) rejections over Meehan to claims 14 through 16.

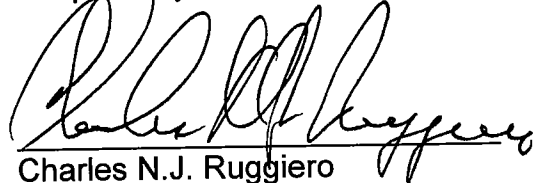
New claim 30 depends from claim 14, and further provides that the hinge provides a space between the base panel and the side panel, which is not disclosed or suggested by Meehan (see Fig. 2). New claim 31 also depends from claim 14, and further provides that the hinge is a film connection between the base panel and the side panel, which is not disclosed or suggested by Meehan.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 14 through 16, 30 and 31 are patentable over Meehan, and respectfully requests issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 14 through 16 and claims 30 and 31.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicant's attorney would help advance this prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

April 20, 2009
Date

Respectfully submitted,



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